1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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apprentices. This source of income, formerly quite considerable, disappeared when weaving became less profitable. Young boys of about 10 years, mostly sons of farmers, were the pupils; they stayed with the weaver for from four to five years, and the work which they produced during the time of their apprenticeship belonged to their master; when their training was completed the parents of the pupil would bring one bundle of corn as payment.

The loose organization of the labour-unit has its counterpart in the organization of the profession at large. Among the weavers no co-operation on a larger scale exists. We have even seen that individuals are quite ready to abandon the profession for other, more attractive, work—an attitude unprecedented among blacksmiths or glass-workers. Yet the symbols of guild organization, the guild ranks, are still preserved. Each group of weavers has its titled guild-head: the head of the Salu (Yagba) weavers is called *Majī*, and the head of the Yoruba weavers *Leshe*. He is also regarded as the head of all *konú* weavers in Nupe, and used to receive from them small annual gifts or tributes. But this common allegiance and co-operation reflects less the professional union than the tribal and cultural unity of these scattered Yoruba groups in Nupe country. The head of the Nupe group of weavers in Bida has no official title but is called simply *Ndakó*, Grandfather. The position of the group-head carries to-day none of the influence and authority which characterizes the guild-heads of other crafts; he neither receives gifts from the fellow craftsmen nor is he expected to advise or help them in their work. As in all other guild-organized crafts the official position of the guild-heads of the weavers was based originally on their role as intermediaries between the king and the craftsmen of Bida. But this role has lost very early all practical importance—earlier than it did in the other Nupe crafts. To quote the guild-head of the Yagba weavers: '*Etsu* Masaba still used to come to our workshops and order cloth personally from the *Majī*. But *Etsu* Umaru, who came after him, already bought what he needed on the market, and so did all the later kings of Nupe.'

BEADWORKERS

As a last example of guild-organized industries I will describe the organization of the beadworkers in Bida. Their craft shows certain specific features which make it specially interesting and distinguish it from the other crafts of Nupe. Beadworking represents, first of all, a typical refining industry, which involves a system of re-exportation comparable only to the most complex forms of economic enterprise found in Western civilization. It involves further the use of money capital and credit operations on a scale unparalleled in Nupe industry. It is, finally, a pure luxury industry, producing more expensive goods than either glass- or brass-work. These various factors have contributed to making the beadworking industry of Bida extremely vulnerable; it has suffered more than the other crafts from the economic stress of the recent years and, a significant result of this, presents the picture of a complete disintegration of co-operative production.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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There are three groups of bead-makers, *lantana*, as they are called, in Bida, one in each part of the town. Their work consists in 'refining' the crude or plain beads which are brought into the country from the north by Hausa and Arab traders, that is to say, they polish and sometimes bore these beads and grind them to various new shapes. The grinding and polishing is done on large flat sandstones especially brought to Bida from the river Niger. The grindstones and a few small iron tools for boring represent all the utensils used by the beadworkers; they are comparatively cheap—the grindstones are sold for 1*s.* in Bida—and the full equipment of a worker costs not more than two or three shillings. The beads are finished in different styles according to the nature of the bead and also according to the prevailing fashion and the demands of the market. The following styles of beads are in fashion to-day: long slender round beads, used for the *egbogi*, the chains of beads which the Nupe women wear round the waist; small ball-like round beads, with highly polished surface; and small flat triangular beads, worn as necklaces. The Nupe dislike edged beads and beads with dull surface; beads of this kind are polished and ground down to the desired shape and appearance. The grinding and polishing of the beads is a long and delicate work. The average production per worker is three beads a day. The finished beads are strung on cotton thread and arranged in long chains in which beads of different kinds and styles are often mixed, and are then ready for the market.

The beadworkers have no special workshops, but carry out their craft in the entrance hut of the compound. Four or five men are working in one hut; each man works independently, sitting on the ground behind his grindstone. As in all other crafts, the men who share the workshop are usually close relations who live in the house of which the entrance hut serves as workshop. Occasionally there is a distant relation or a stranger amongst them who lives in another house and comes there only to work. More rarely an individual beadworker who has no relations practising the same profession would work alone in his own house. Traders and buyers, who bring beads to be polished or bored, or who collect the finished article, are constant visitors in the workshops of the *lantana*.

In the economic arrangement which obtains in the Bida beadworking industry the majority of workers are reduced to the position of mere labourers, working to order and paid at a piece-rate. One of the bead-makers in the workshop may act as contractor: he buys the crude beads from the Hausa or Arab trader and has them worked by his fellow workers. He divides the work among them and pays them ½*d.* per bead. The finished chain of beads is entrusted to the wife of the contractor; she will sell it in the market or to one of the traders in beads, who will then 're-export' these products of Bida fashion industry to the north. A chain of crude beads bought for 7*s.* will fetch 10*s.* as the finished article; 2*d.* to 3*d.* go to the woman 'middleman' as commission, and about 1*s.* 8*d.* (for a chain, say, of forty beads) goes to pay the wages of the labourers, so the contractor can make a net profit of 1*s.* 2*d.* on work that took three to four days to complete; the individual labourers make in the same

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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time 5*d*. Evidently, only a man who possesses some capital can assume the role of contractor, and the ordinary beadworker can hardly hope, with his daily wages of 1½*d*., ever to attain this position. In a few cases I have found two contractors in the same workshop; but many other workshops numbered no 'capitalist' among their workers. In a situation of this kind two other methods are open to the beadworkers: either they buy the crude beads on credit from the traders and pay them back after they have sold the finished article; or they undertake the 'refining' work on a piece-contract for a trader in beads—the Hausa or Arab trader, or sometimes a 'capitalist' woman of the beadworker's family. In neither case does the work of the beadworkers include *efakó* work, even on the smallest scale. All work is done individually, and even unmarried young men are working on their own, being assigned by the contractor a task suitable to their skill and experience. The beadworkers, finally, do not practise farming in addition to the handicraft.

Formerly it was the family head and, on a larger scale, the guild-master who assumed regularly the role of contractor and financier. As in all other crafts the guild-head made himself responsible for 'maintenance of labour' in the group, which means that he undertook to provide the necessary working capital and credit and to distribute the work effectively among the craftsmen. The guild-head, called *Majī*, Master, also acted as the agent of the king in all matters concerning the trade in beads. When the foreign traders in precious stones arrived in Bida, they would not take their goods at once to the public market, but would show them first to the guild-head of the *lantana*, who would select what he needed, and what he thought suitable for the king and court. He would take the collection of newly arrived beads to the king and advise him on the purchase; then, receiving the order for the 'refining' of the beads, he would distribute the work among the workshops of the *lantana* paying the workers the usual piece-rate and keeping a large commission for himself. The constant demands of the court—the requirements of the fashionable ladies in the harems of Nupe royalty, bride-price and dowry (of which chains of beads form an essential part) which the king pays for innumerable relations and dependants—kept the beadworkers of Bida busy. Orders amounting to £5 and more at a time, which secured the *Majī* a commission of £1, were by no means rare. The profits made in this fashion enabled the guild-head to finance the ordinary work of his group and to offer them credit for the purchase of their 'raw material'. In these times of prosperity the individual worker who desired to act himself as contractor could without difficulty obtain large credits (up to £1 or £2) from the Hausa bead traders. The guild organization and the strong financial position of the guild-head were evidently regarded as sufficient security.

All this is a thing of the past. The court no longer buys beads from the beadworker guild. European beads, cheaper and much more attractive in shape and colouring,[1] have crushed the native industry. With the decline of the financial position of the guild-head, outside credit

[1] Some of the European beads which are sold in the markets of Nigeria are, in fact, specially manufactured as copies of the native style.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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has also disappeared. The result is a complete disintegration of the guild system. The guild-head, no longer able to act as financier and contractor, has lost his position of authority; as his contribution to the productive organization of the group was concerned exclusively with these financial and credit operations, the very *raison d'être* of a guild-head has disappeared. This is evident in the manner in which the *Majī* is treated by the other craftsmen; no one pays the slightest attention to him. Since he is too old now to earn money, he is supported by his son —but this is entirely a family matter, and in no way concerns the professional group at large. He receives no gifts or shares in the profits, not so much as an occasional present of kola-nuts, which even in the greatly weakened guild organization of the weavers still marks the privileged position of the guild-head. If I have called this change in the productive organization of the beadworkers a decline and disintegration, it is also felt as such by the people themselves. To them, it appears as the sad decline of a once highly respected and well-organized craft: as one of them said, 'the beadworkers to-day live from hand to mouth; their *Majī* has no longer any authority; theirs is an unlucky trade' (*gwa ɛ̀i*, lit. an unlucky hand).

by women mostly among the Bida upper classes.[33] Their work is not organized in a guild.

Beadworkers are known as *lantana* and their craft, a luxury industry, consists of the "refining" of crude beads bought from Hausa and Arab traders; it is carried out in the entrance-hut of the compound and is entirely individual. The majority of the workers are paid at piece-rates, one of them acting as contractor, and the chain of finished beads is traded by his wife. This industry is being extinguished by imports of European beads.[34]

Glass-makers (*masaga*) claim to have originated in Egypt. Members of the guild are Moslems. The head (*tura*) is elected by popular vote. They have the most strongly organized and conspicuously self-contained of the Nupe craft guilds and there is a regular system of apprenticeship. This craft is mainly concentrated in Bida town. Black glass (*bikini*) is made, but this is being largely replaced by coloured glass (*kwalaba*) obtained by melting down bottles which have been bought by women traders. The native glass is made in one workshop, while fabrication is completed in others. Glass-workers have their market in their own quarter. Their main products are brightly coloured beads and bangles. Unlike other craftsmen, glass-workers undertake no agricultural work. There is no *bucá* work, all work being *efakó* with small wages.[35]

Tailoring and embroidery are individual crafts and members of the same household may belong to different professions. Tailors, including machine tailors, sometimes visit surrounding villages on their market days to find work. Their main products are caps, plain and embroidered gowns, trousers, and saddle-cloths. Their embroidered gowns are famous all over Nigeria.

Straw-hat makers use a "shape" of clay or wood and the crown of the hat is sometimes partly covered with leather. This is considered a "lazy" occupation, but a few craftsmen who have been taught European designs are well-to-do.

Mat-makers of certain villages, e.g., Kutigi, are famous, and make oval or square, multi-coloured grass mats. The Basa-Nge of Igala Division make baskets and mats.

Leather-workers formerly supplied a large part of the military equipment of the Nupe army—saddlery, leather shields, sword sheaths, quivers for arrows, etc. They work mainly in Bida town.[36]

Barber-doctors cut hair for men, women, and children; shave the head and cut the tribal marks of new-born babies at the naming ceremony and cut toe and finger nails. Individuals specialize in tattooing, medicines for diseases, contraceptives, cures for barrenness, treatment of lunacy, inhalants (*turare*), and minor operations such as circumcision and blood-letting. Hausa barbers remove the uvula of children.

Bida barbers, who are busy and prosperous, do not farm and their sons always become barbers, but this is not a "closed" craft. The length of apprenticeship varies. The most highly paid jobs are regarded by the family group as *efakó*, other jobs as *bucá*. There is a three-fold guild organization in Bida, corresponding to the territories of the three royal houses. Contributions from all *efakó* income are paid to the guild-head, who administers the guild fund, deducting money for common expenses and paying the rest in full to each member of the guild in turn.

There are also "*medicine-men*," whose craft is based on magical ideas and closely connected with divining and the Nupe religious system.[37]

Drummers and dancers, organized in mainly hereditary guilds, but with a system of apprenticeship, are found in all villages. Drumming may be recreational, for ceremony and ritual or ancillary to agricultural production (e.g., farming *egbe*). In

[33] Ibid., pp. 278–82.
[34] Ibid., pp. 282–5.
[35] Nadel, op. cit., pp. 274–8; 1940b, pp. 85–6; Robertson, 1935.
[36] Nadel, 1942, pp. 286–90; Line, 1947; Hopkins, 1934.
[37] Nadel, op. cit., pp. 298–301, and see below, pp. 46–7.

278 789 either with or without specified actions and utterances. Their avowed purposes are frequently therapeutic, but also include defences against theft, witchcraft, and devices to render one invisible. Nupe leech-lore includes both rational empirical cures and mystical rites which can produce no result beyond increasing the confidence of the user. Nor is there any distinction in Nupe vocabulary, for the term *cigbe* is used for all medicines. Medicines may be distinguished as those which are practically effective or may be easily taken as being effective by practitioners, and those whose objective irrationality cannot be mistaken. The latter class may include devices for rendering a man invisible, medicines for killing thieves and fending off witchcraft, and for making hoes do their work in half the normal time.

791 759 There are four main types of practitioners of medicine: the guild of Moslem barber-doctors, the pagan order of *cigbeciši*, and two kinds of individual practitioners.

306 The barber-doctors' guild is recognized by the *Etsu* Nupe but is confined almost entirely to the towns. The guild head occupies an important position at court. They are entirely concerned with therapeutic medicines, but are regarded with contempt in the country districts where people feel that a barber cannot know about such things.

791 784 The *cigbeciši*, formerly recognized by the *Etsu*, but since replaced by the barber-doctors, are much more loosely organized than the guild. Whereas the latter keep their knowledge mainly within their lineages, the *cigbeciši* crafts can be bought by anyone. There is little corporate activity beyond occasional gatherings at the local head's house to discuss practice. The head is traditionally responsible for all new medicines. Offerings are made to the spirits of the order and through them to *Sokó*, the ultimate source of *cigbe*, whenever a new medicine is discovered. The names of spirits may also be introduced in the application of medicines, but there appears to be no invocation. With this mystical approach there is a greater sense of the implications of " medicine " for good and for evil. While Moslem barbers, though not concerned with the more " dangerous " medicines, sell without scruple medicines for immoral purposes, such as those to induce barrenness in women, *cigbeciši* claim to be very particular as to whom they sell the more powerful *cigbe*. The powers of witchcraft are often said to require medicines, while the conflict between witchcraft and anti-witchcraft is sometimes represented as a struggle between good and bad *cigbe*.

Individual practitioners are of two kinds: those who provide cures for petty ailments, and Moslem mallams and scholars who write a passage from the Koran which is washed off and drunk by the patient. They also provide amulets containing Koran texts, as elsewhere in Islamic West Africa.

Some medicines, the ingredients of which are not known, belong to descent groups and are kept in vessels into which libations of beer and offerings of blood are poured to the ancestors.

754 751 The neophyte to the order of witches as imagined by the Nupe must, it is believed, bathe himself in certain medicines and observe certain taboos, and the masked dancer who impersonates and is possessed by the spirit of the anti-witchcraft society[10] uses certain medicines while others are placed on the mask to give it and its dancer their unique character. There are in addition individual medicines used as defences against magic, and ordeal medicines which will kill the witch who drinks, but leave the innocent unharmed.

Divination[11]

787 Divination plays an important part in Nupe life and is used not only to determine the rites to be performed in particular situations but to decide such matters as the election of a high officer of state. The two methods used are the old system,

[10] See below.

[11] Nadel, 1942, p. 379; 1954a, pp. 36–67.